10746

A LETTER TO THE CLERGY of the County of *Norfolk*, ON THE ABOLITION of TITHES.

Price Six-pence.

BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL

A

LETTER

TO THE

CLERGY of the County of NORFOLK.

IN WHICH

The Neceſſity for the Abolition of TITHES

IS PLAINLY PROVED,

AND

The Propriety of other PLANS,

IS FULLY EVINCED.

By NO-TITHE-GATHERER.

Aurum avidas Mentes, & barbara corda rapinis
Polluit, atque armat contemptu pectora Divum.

NORWICH:

Printed and ſold by WILLIAM CHASE.

MDCCLXXIII.

A

LETTER

To the Reverend the Clergy of the County of Norfolk.

Gentlemen,

YOU are without doubt informed, that a Meeting is appointed in this County, for the conſideration of an equivalent to be given to the Clergy in lieu of Tythes. I ſuppoſe likewiſe you know, that this reſolution was taken in compliance with the requeſt made to the Grand Jury, by the honourable, though not antient, Anti-tithe Aſſociation eſtabliſhed in London.

From the unlucky and never enough to be lamented prejudices of your education, it is to be feared, that this deſign will appear to ſome of you at leaſt to ſpring from no other ſoils than thoſe of avarice and irreligion, and to be likely to produce no other fruits than thoſe of injuſtice, tyranny and oppreſ-

ſion. Perſuaded as I am that theſe ſentiments are wrong, and deeming it my duty to remove your errors; you will I hope attend with patience, whilſt I labour to convince you, that the Scheme is far from owing its exiſtence to thoſe deteſtable motives you ſuppoſe, or that it is productive of the ill conſequences which you imagine. On the contrary, I think I can ſhow, that it is propagated on the moſt evident principles of juſtice, benevolence and piety, that it has the moſt beneficial tendency to advance your honour, and increaſe your emoluments as ſons of the Church, and the moſt medicinal effect to lull the good old lady herſelf into the ſoundeſt repoſe.

To deſcend into the profoundeſt depths of my ſubject, I ought indeed to ſet off from this poſtulatum; "that of all prejudices, Religion is the moſt abſurd and nonſenſical." From whence it would immediately follow, that all attention to the preſervation of Chriſtianity or the ſupport of its miniſters, is a degradation to the character of every perſon of modern politeneſs, or faſhionable education.

But

But though a cloſe attention to the brilliant converſation of moſt of our fine gentlemen, whether travelled or untravelled, would enable me to retail a moſt elegant declamation upon this topic, yet unfortunately I muſt make a ſacrifice of my fame to the following reaſons.

In the firſt place, I am afraid, that were I to ſet this point before your eyes in all the bright effulgence of rhetorick, I ſhould ſtill fail of ſucceſs,

So thick a drop ſerene hath quench'd their Orbs,
Or dim ſuffuſion veil'd.

Secondly. Was I able to make any converts to this opinion, I ſhould not enjoy my victory in eaſe and ſecurity. For however the proof might meet with acquieſcence amidſt the tumults of buſineſs, the blandiſhments of pleaſure, or the roar of jollity; yet ſhould reaſon's ſtill ſmall voice (as it ſometimes will) arreſt the attention, or ſhould that griezly phantom death (as he certainly muſt) brandiſh his dart, either of them, I am afraid, would reinſtate my converts in their former

opinions, and ſtrip me of all the trophies of my victory.

THIRDLY. I have ingenuouſneſs enough even to confeſs, whatever diſgrace it may occaſion me; that I am totally unable to convert others to this opinion, being ſo dull of apprehenſion, as never to have been able myſelf to be convinced of its truth. For though I have had the honour of knowing, and often converſing with many in the candidate's ſenſe of the word, Gentlemen, (not Parſons*) yet they have been chiefly thoſe of this county, who have not had ſtrength of genius ſufficient to emancipate themſelves from every prejudice in favour of the laws and religion of their country, nor been able to exchange their Engliſh principles for French fripperies or Italian vices. They have ſtill credulity enough to think it is not abſolutely certain, that Chriſ-

* This alludes to the form of addreſs adopted by all who are or would be Repreſentatives in Parliament; "To the Gentlemen, Clergy, Freeholders, &c." From whence it is certainly evident, that in their opinion, the Clergy are not Gentlemen. And indeed it has been maintained, that it muſt be their opinion likewiſe, if they write with preciſion, that neither Gentlemen nor Clergy are Freeholders.

Chriſtianity is a mere impoſture; to believe that a future ſtate is not entirely without proof; and that even the exiſtence of a God is not altogether impoſſible.

In London indeed, I have had ſometimes the honour of converſing with thoſe who had nobly extirpated every prejudice "which the Nurſe or Prieſt had taught." But though they delivered their deciſions with as warm an enthuſiaſm, and as wild an agitation as the Pythian Prieſteſs pronounced the oracles at Delphos, yet ſuch is the difference between a foreign and domeſtic education, that I have known at an Engliſh Univerſity men much leſs ignorant, miſtaken for dunces.

I must therefore for the foregoing reaſons, beg to be excuſed from diving into this profound and indeed bottomleſs ſubject, and ſhall begin with the ſuppoſition of its being already known to you, that the embrio from whence the Anti-tithe Aſſociation ſprung, was firſt formed in the London Evening Poſt; and had a perſon for its father who took the appellation of Georgicus. That the

the brat has been ſince introduced into the world in another vehicle, and has been chriſtened, "The Iniquity of Tithes."

You might perhaps at firſt with all the ſimplicity of ruſtic apprehenſion, ſtart at the very repetition of this name, and with a Shandean prejudice wonder, that a perſon could be found in the kingdom to patronize any thing, under ſo ſcandalous a title. Baniſh however your ſurpriſe but for a moment, and this appellation will appear to you as the reſult of the higheſt wiſdom, of the greateſt juſtice, the moſt extreme ſagacity, and moſt extenſive views. For as it is generally allowed, that the Clergy have by the laws of the land as undoubted a right to their Tithes, as the Layman to his eſtate, what could the perſon who ſtood Godfather in this caſe mean to inſinuate, but that the latter was as iniquitous a poſſeſſion as the former. And how can any gentlemen poſſeſſed of landed property, give a ſtronger proof of patriotiſm and wiſdom than by the adoption of this ſcheme? Since by that means, they virtually diſclaim, in the moſt diſintereſted manner,

ner, all right and title even to their own eſtates.

I DOUBT not therefore, but the ſame love of juſtice which prompts them to enter into a junto for ſeizing the poſſeſſions of the Clergy, will induce them to unite with another much talked of Aſſociation: the object of which is, to petition the King to repoſſeſs himſelf of the lands of thoſe gentlemen, and to regrant them in parcels of fifty or ſixty acres to all thoſe who either want or wiſh for them. A petition which can not fail of ſucceſs, as it is agreeable to the inclinations, and conducive likewiſe to the intereſts of ſo conſiderable a majority of his Majeſty's ſubjects.

SOME few land-owners indeed leſs generous than the reſt, foreſeeing that upon every principle of equity, this muſt be a natural conſequence, have endeavoured to make a diſtinction between clerical and lay poſſeſſions, and maintain that the former ought to be conſider'd, only as wages. But it is evident, that to make this attempt at a diſtinction

tion, is to erect a battery for the annoyance of themſelves, inſtead of their adverſary. For as all landed property was originally granted by the Crown only as wages, that is to ſay, on conditions of the performance of certain ſervices, which have long ſince been omitted to be performed by every order of men except the Clergy, it unluckily follows upon that principle, that all landed poſſeſſions except theirs, have been long ſince legally forfeited to his Majeſty. How far then it is probable, that ſome future King of England may even without a petition lay claim to the lands of the laity, inſtead of depending for ſubſiſtence upon the will of his ſubjects, is worthy of their conſideration, though it is an event too obſcure for me to pretend now to foreſee, and a ſpeculation too deep for me to attempt at preſent to inveſtigate.

But you will aſk; Is it then only a conviction of the illegality and iniquity of all the Engliſh laws concerning property, which gives being to this ſcheme? No it muſt be confeſſed, the heads of all are not long or clear enough to reach and diſcern ſo refined

fined an argument. Other reaſons are aſſigned, which do equal honour to the goodneſs of their intentions at leaſt, if not to the ſagacity of their deſigns. One is, "That as "Tithes ſometimes occaſion diſputes be-"tween the Rector or Vicar and his Pa-"riſhioners, they diminiſh the reſpect due to "the Clergy, and leſſen their power of do-"ing good." Now, as the former circumſtance is an inconvenience which affects only the Clergy, and therefore one would think they, and they only, are the proper judges whether it is worth while to alter the mode of payment on that account; how kind is it in the Laity to feel for the Clergy, more than they do for themſelves. And as to the latter circumſtance, what honour does it reflect on the patrons of this ſcheme, that they have ſo excluſive a claim to piety, as to exceed even the Miniſters of Religion in their ſolicitude for its intereſts. This is the more highly commendable in them, as every one muſt confeſs, they never on other occaſions ſhew any very oſtentatious regard to religion; and even in this inſtance, many of them I dare to ſay will have ſo much modeſty as to

——— "bluſh to find it Fame."

THERE is indeed one little circumſtance attending this argument, which great genius's may be able to overlook, but little ones cannot; that it is rather an argument for taking Tithes in Kind, (as the Law authoriſes) than againſt it. For where that is done, no diſputes ariſe. They are only occaſioned, by the acceptance of a compoſition in lieu of tithes. If a Rector or Vicar in that caſe raiſe his compoſition, he is ſure to be abuſed, and which is very hard, the abuſe is always in proportion to the ſum of which a preſent has been before made to the pariſhioners. Indeed the Farmers are upon ſuch an occaſion ſo civil, as to make no difference in their reſentment, whether they be raiſed ſixpence or two ſhillings per acre. To a man therefore of plain common ſenſe it ſhould appear, that if any argument be deduced from hence for the abolition of Tithes, I am ſorry to ſay it cannot be drawn from the wiſdom of the Clergy in ſtrictly demanding all that is their due, but from their folly in benevolently accepting a part inſtead of the whole.

INDEED

INDEED it muſt be confeſſed, that Lay-Landlords are themſelves ſubject to ſimilar aſperſions and abuſe, if they ever attempt to raiſe a farm after they have had the good-nature to give away ſeveral thouſand pounds to the tenants. And as it has not yet tranſpired with certainty, that they are deſirous the Legiſlature ſhould on that account take away their lands, it reflects the higheſt credit on thoſe who are for that reaſon advocates for the abolition of Tithes. For they muſt not only be more ſolicitous, (as we juſt now obſerved) that reſpect ſhould be paid to the Miniſters of the Church, than the Miniſters themſelves are; but muſt be even more anxious for the preſervation of the honour and reputation of the Clergy, than of their own.

THERE is another argument urged for the abolition of Tithes, which I dare to ſay you have ſeen advertiſed in ſome of the London papers by the Anti-Tithe Aſſociation, at which I doubt, if you will confeſs the truth, you have often dared to laugh, and which you have ſtigmatiſed with the appellations of abſurd

abſurd and ridiculous. You already gueſs, that the argument I allude to, muſt be that which affirms, "that Tithes are a great diſ-"couragement to Agriculture." And you will pardon me, I hope, if what appears to you to be an inſtance of the greateſt folly, ſeems to me to be a proof of the higheſt cunning. For can men give a ſtronger proof of this higheſt ſpecies of wiſdom, than to be able (where many hypotheſes may be aſſigned as cauſes of an event) to impoſe upon the underſtandings of others that which favours their own party, though it has not the minuteſt influence in the production of the effect. Such is the caſe in the argument before us, and I doubt not but it has eſcaped without detection in every county of the kingdom, where there is a greater proportion of paſture than of arable land. The only defect which ſeems to have attended the advancers of this poſition, was a little want of recollection, that the London News-papers are read by the inhabitants of Norfolk as well as of other counties, where it is impoſſible the argument ſhould produce the effect which was intended. For though it was

ſaid by the facetious Charles the Second, that Norfolk was only fit to be cut into roads for the reſt of the kingdom; and Sir Thomas Brown informs us, it was once a common opinion that the lands here were plowed by a pair of rabbits and a caſe-knife, yet in ſpite of Tithes, its lands by culture now produce crops ſcarce inferior to any in the kingdom. There is hardly an orchard in it now left unplowed, nor is the plough-ſhare ſtopped by any thing but the threſhold of the farm-houſe. This is ſo notorious a fact, that if you had promiſed yourſelves any diverſion from hearing this argument advanced at the Michaelmas Meeting, I am ſorry to inform you, you will certainly be diſappointed. For I will be bold to affirm, that there is not a Nobleman, a Baronet, an Eſquire, or Farmer in this county, who has not more wiſdom than to urge an argument, which no man can look out of his own door without being able by ocular demonſtration to confute.

Upon ſecond thoughts, I muſt beg leave to retract my aſſertion, that none but arable

land is now to be ſeen in this county. For on further recollection it occurs to me that ſome ſtill remains, into which the farmer dares not to enter with his plough, though he can even bring incontrovertible proofs that he ſhould render it more profitable to the owner, and more beneficial to the public*. This impediment to agriculture, even their enemies muſt confeſs, does not ariſe in the tenant, from the fear of paying exorbitant Tithes to the Parſon, but from dread of the enormous penalty hung over his head by the Landlord. But if even the reverſe were true, as this reſerve of land from tillage is generally made to procure ſhelter for thoſe moſt uſeful parts of the creation, entitled Game, (that they may eat up the produce of the other lands in ſecurity) it would be very cruel that complaints ſhould be lodged againſt Divines as inſtruments to this effect, by any one at leaſt who is bleſſed in this land of liberty with a landed eſtate, yielding and paying yearly and every year, more than ninety nine pounds, nineteen ſhillings, and eleven pence three farthings.

* See the caſe between Mr. Rolfe and Peterſon.

ANOTHER objection has been urged to Tithes, "that they are the cauſe of the preſent exorbitant price of proviſions." Here again I am afraid you begin to look arch, to purſe up your Mouths in a ſimper, and plume yourſelves upon your ſagacity in the diſcovery, that the riſe of Tithes was the effect not the cauſe of the dearneſs of proviſions; and that therefore this argument muſt be void of all ſenſe and reaſon. It muſt indeed be confeſſed, that you have ſome reaſon to congratulate yourſelves on the truth of your firſt obſervation. And it muſt be owned that the Antitithe Aſſociation have unfortunately ſhown themſelves totally ignorant of country affairs, by miſtaking the effect for the cauſe; or in the ruſtic phraſe, placing the cart before the horſe. But though candour obliges me to allow that your premiſes are juſt, the ſame impartiality induces me to acknowledge that your concluſion is falſe. For if the Clergy had not raiſed their Tithes, you ſurely muſt grant they could not have eaten. And if all the Rectors and Vicars in the kingdom, (allowing upon a very moderate computation but ſix children to each) would but

have reſolved to have ſtarved themſelves and Families, you cannot deny that the vaſt diminution in the conſumption of proviſions, which the loſs of ſo many keen appetites would have occaſioned, muſt certainly have made a very conſiderable deduction in the price.

SUCH an uncommon inſtance of generoſity, would indeed have been a little hard upon the lay landlords and the farmers. For, the former, could then never have elevated their rents to the glorious height to which they are now aſcended, and muſt conſequently have moped all the year at their country ſeats, deprived of the exhilarating pleaſures of the Pantheon and Cornely's, and robbed of all the ſubſtantial joys which attend the ſpending a whole year's rental of their eſtates in one night at Arthur's or Almack's. The farmer could then never have rivalled his landlord in dreſs, luxury or equipage; but muſt have been contented to have jogged on in the beaten track, with his old faſhioned companions, induſtry, frugality, and carefulneſs. Their ſons, inſtead of emulating the young 'ſquires in the uſeful accompliſhments

compliſhments of hunting and ſhooting, muſt have ſubmitted to the low drudgery of plowing or ſowing. Their daughters (I beg their pardon) their young ladies, would have loſt all the ſolid advantages of a boarding ſchool, and the polite embelliſhments of a *taſty* education. The linen gown and cherry-coloured top-knot muſt have continued their higheſt ornaments, inſtead of the white riding habit and blue feather. Their fingers had never been exerciſed in working catgut or muſlin, nor their feet gracefully twiſted in a minuet or cotillion, but their white hands and delicate limbs (O dire to tell) muſt have been laborioufly employed in cooking, milking and churning. O Tempora! O Mores! What farmer, or his family, could bear the thought of the return of ſuch Gothic days of ignorance and barbariſm, though they ſhould even by that means, "get rid of the Parſon."

HAVING now acquainted you, with all the weighty arguments urged in favour of the abolition of Tithes, you may wiſh perhaps to know what is propoſed as an equivalent in lieu of them.

But before I proceed to gratify your curioſity, let me exhort you to ſhew forth your gratitude. For when you look around your own and neighbouring pariſhes, and conſider with yourſelves how very ſmall the compoſitions are which are taken inſtead of Tithes in kind; can you refuſe to pour out the warmeſt effuſion of thanks to thoſe Gentlemen and Farmers for their juſtice, kindneſs, and benevolence, who are not willing you ſhould continue to receive ſo poor a pittance though you are content with it; but are deſirous you ſhould be paid to the uttermoſt mite. This attention to your intereſt muſt be acknowledged to be exceeding kind even in the landlords. But how doubly, how exquiſitely diſintereſted and generous is it in the occupier, out of whoſe pocket the equivalent muſt ultimately come, let it be what it will, and which in moſt pariſhes muſt in future be double what is paid at preſent. What makes this conduct the higher honour to them, and the greater obligation to the Clergy, is, that it was never before deemed a farmer's ruling paſſion to part with his money upon ſuch an occaſion, if he could keep it. There is a certain untoward circumſtance

ſtance which attends the attempt to fix upon an equivalent in lieu of Tithes, which would be ſufficient to daunt and diſcourage all moderate genius's in the plan of their projects, and in their ſchemes of reformation. How happy is it then, that ſuch is the electric force of the genius of theſe Tithe projectors, that like lightning it pervades every object, and breaks through every obſtacle. To others it would ſeem an unconquerable difficulty, but to them it does not appear to be the leaſt diſcouragement, that not an objection has been urged againſt the preſent mode of Tithes, but which (if it had any) would have equal force againſt all their ſchemes for a ſubſtitution in lieu of them, with this further additional misfortune, that each of them is liable to other objections peculiar to themſelves.

THE firſt propoſal I ſhall mention, is, that "of giving a certain portion of lands in the room of Tithes." This indeed is a moſt generous offer in the landed gentry. For that they would thus condeſcend to ſeparate, partition, divide, and parcel out their eſtates for the benefit of the Clergy, is more than they

could either have expected, or desired. It seems too, at first sight at least, very benevolent to the farmers. For it appears to be a most disinterested design to ease the farmer of all the burden of Tithes, and to take all the expence of them upon the landlords themselves. But as to the latter part of the plan, I am sorry I am bound in conscience to declare, it has been whispered, that this is not intended. But as the farmers would then pay no more Tithes to the Parsons, it is said they will be obliged to pay an additional rent to their landlords. Not in proportion to the paltry composition for Tithes of two and three pence, two and six pence, three shillings, or three and six pence in the pound, but in proportion to the true, just, and full, real, value of the Tithes in kind. How far such a report is probable, or whether it is likely to infuse new vigour and spirit into the occupiers of lands, they must be the best judges: and what tendency it has to the improvement of agriculture, and the reduction of the price of provisions, let the community at large determine.

THERE are ſome land-owners indeed, who themſelves have ſome objection to this ſcheme. Not that they are leſs willing than others, to give up their lands for the benefit of the Clergy; (no periſh the thought) but they do not altogether approve of ſo much land in mortmain even though it were to be holden by their favourites, the Clergy. Whatever force this objection may be thought to have, this at leaſt muſt be allowed, that it can be attributed to no other motive than the ſublimeſt patriotiſm, which riſes above every ſelfiſh conſideration of the advantage of the propoſers. For they certainly cannot be ſo unacquainted with their own affairs as not to know, that the leſs land there is to ſell, the greater will be the price; and therefore the more land of others is held in mortmain which cannot be ſold, the greater is the value of theirs which can.

ANOTHER plan which has been mentioned, is that "of a Corn Rent." But in this propoſal a very conſiderable number of the beneficed Clergy (the poor Vicars I mean) are entirely forfotten. It is indeed no wonder, that they who are not entitled to any barley to make

make malt, nor to any corn to make bread, that is to ſay, who have neither beer to drink, nor bread to eat with their meat, ſhould be overlooked amongſt plump Impropriators, and double-chinned Rectors. But it is a wonder it did not occur to the projectors who are ſo fond of ſmoking the Parſons, that the roſy faced Rector did not live by Bread and October alone, and that he could not carry the goodly round belly without ſupplies of Milk, Eggs, Bacon, Lamb, Veal, Chickens, Turkies and Geeſe; which tho' they are denominated ſmall Tithes, they afford I ween no ſmall nouriſhment.

ANOTHER ſcheme propoſed, is, "That the Clergy ſhould be paid their dues by a pound rate, to be gathered by the Churchwarden and Overſeers in the ſame manner as all other pariſh rates are." This propoſal appears at firſt indeed a very kind and humane indulgence to the ruling paſſion of Divines, the love of eaſe. For it is making a proviſion by law that others ſhould do for them, what they now are obliged to do for themſelves. It is only to be feared, that the perverſeneſs of the Clergy may make them think otherwiſe,

as

as they may apprehend more difficulty will in that caſe attend the knowledge of the real rents of farms, than at preſent. For that there is a poſſibility that tenants might then conceal the value of their rents is not known from theory indeed, but only from experience that they ſometimes do now. Which induces ſome of the Clergy at preſent, ſtrange though it may appear, to prefer as a leſs troubleſome method, an agreement by the acre upon a fair valuation of the land. Secondly, It may be urged that this like all the other ſchemes muſt be prejudicial to the farmer, as it is not to be ſuppoſed, but that the full value of Tithes would be eſtimated before the rate would be fixed. Thirdly, it may be objected, if landlords were not ſo diſintereſted as to over-rule all ſuch objections, that it would be diſadvantageous to them as well as the farmer. For then the more rent the tenant paid, the more Tithe would he likewiſe pay. Whereas at preſent, the leſs the Rector takes, the more ſome landlords demand; making uſe of this argument, that the farmer can afford to pay more rent as he pays ſo little Tithes; and it muſt be confeſſed

the

the occupier is certainly not injured, as he only pays to the landlord, what is due to the parſon.

THERE appears therefore to be no other method of obviating the inconveniencies which attend this plan, than fixing by a law as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Perſians, that the compoſitions ſhould for ever be continued to be paid in lieu of Tithes which are now paid. And though this might in any other caſe be ſtigmatized with the odious name of robbery, yet in this, the evil would be pardoned, for the ſake of the good which would accrue from it. As it would take the money from the pockets of the Parſons to put into the hands of Gentlemen, who would much ſooner circulate it to the benefit of the trade of the capital, and certainly therefore to the vaſt relief of the poor in the country.

THERE is only one propoſal more remains to be mentioned, and which was reſerved for the laſt, as it is the greateſt favourite with the projectors. It is no wonder indeed, that it is

the

the darling ſcheme, ſince it bears in its aſpect more evident marks of wiſdom and equity even than any of the reſt. It is, "that all the Tithes in the kingdom ſhould be ſold, that the money ariſing from them ſhould be placed in the funds, and that the intereſt of it ſhould be paid to the Clergy." Truly excellent as the device is, I ſhall be pardoned I hope, if I juſt venture to ſuggeſt, that it may not be altogether loſt labour to reflect, whether it is not poſſible, that it may be more for the credit and advantage of the landed Gentlemen, that the greater part of the Clergy ſhould through their means receive their daily bread as they now do, than that ſo large a body of people ſhould henceforth be induced by every motive of duty, gratitude and intereſt, to ſide with every other part of the community againſt the poſſeſſors of landed property. And indeed, if in this enlightened age we could ſuppoſe, that the Clergy had any greater regard for poſterity than the reſt of mankind, they would probably make ſome objection to this ſcheme. They might complain,

that

that as the value of money is continually decreaſing, their ſucceſſors would not upon this plan fare quite ſo well as themſelves. But this objection whatever force it may appear to have to ſome, muſt be granted to be in reality but a very trifling one. For as a ſenſe of religion has for ſome years paſt decreaſed much faſter than the value of money, it is moſt probable, that will be entirely extinct, long before the intereſt of the money will fail. Then,

None will be wanted to defend her cauſe,
Lights of the Church, or guardians of the laws.

HAVING thus, Gentlemen, with the moſt unwearied labour, and the moſt unremitted attention, endeavoured to ſet forth to you in the brighteſt colours, not only the wiſdom and piety of the reaſons for the abolition of Tithes, but likewiſe the juſtice and benevolence of the plans offered for the future maintenance of the Clergy; I have, I think, reaſon to hope and expect, that you will give the moſt unqueſtionable proof of your conviction of theſe truths, by crouching low at the feet of the Laity, making

making a voluntary ſurrender of all your poſſeſſions into their Hands, and gladly accepting whatever ſtipend they ſhall from their exuberant generoſity and condeſcending goodneſs vouchſafe to beſtow. I truſt, likewiſe, that all of you impreſſed, as you muſt be, with the deepeſt ſenſe of gratitude, will not fail to return your humbleſt thanks to the Antitithe Aſſociation, for that truly pious and benevolent attention to your intereſt and honour, which has occaſioned in them ſo utter a diſregard and neglect of their own.

I am, Gentlemen,

With the greateſt regard for you,

And with the deepeſt profundity of reſpect for the Antitithians,

Your and their moſt obedient,

humble ſervant,

NO-TITHE-GATHERER.